

First Lehi Commercial Enterprise-Fishing

John Cox, was the first man to build a raft to cross the river. It was built to help John Ryan get his belongings to the Sulphur Springs settlement. He had become involved with the Indians in Skull Valley. They had chased him away. He had killed two of them in a skirmish and they were after him.

This first raft to get across the Jordan River, started John Cox in the navigation interest. He started by hollowing a tree trunk for a canoe. He used the canoe to go up the Jordan River and to go out on Utah Lake. He fashioned a grill net to catch fish in the river. He would also shoot geese and ducks from his canoe. He was able to share his fish, geese and ducks with the rest of the settlement.

His inspiration brought the fishing enterprise to a new level. Claiborne Thomas, with the help of the women of the settlement, succeeded in making a hundred foot seine net out of twine they purchased in Salt Lake City. Clairborne Thomas also purchased a skiff for use on the Lake for fishing.

With the equipment, the settlement were able to catch sufficient fish to satisfy all their needs that winter. Later they started catching more than their needs. They started selling fish to surrounding settlements including as far away as Salt Lake and Tooele. This was a great financial benefit to the settlement and became Lehi's first commercial enterprise.